

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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KESTELL OF GREYSTONE.

A SERIAL STORY.

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"A Faïre Damzell," etc., etc.*

CHAPTER IX. SECOND SIGHT.

EVERY one has noticed that if some event which appears to us personally of importance takes place, it is very often followed by another. We can look back at certain years that seemed crowded by these so-called "turning-points;" we can trace the net-work for a little space, till, feeling giddy, as if we watched too closely a very varied landscape from a high tower, we are glad to give up the scrutiny, and go down to a lower level. But even as these events are taking place, we are conscious that they do not come singly, and that the proverb, "Misfortunes never come alone," has a strange truth in it, so that one wonders if the events of our lives have cycles like comets and meteoric showers.

Mr. Kestell's interview with Elva, full as it was of strange happiness for him, was not one of unmixed joy. He was more disturbed than he cared to own about young Akister. He must, of course, keep Elva's secret; and he hoped neither the young man nor his father would speak to him on the subject, for, of course, his "little girl" must please herself. But it was unfortunate, very. To look at Walter Akister, one could not fancy him in love. Elva was right. But, apart from the man himself, his position was all that could be desired. Was his wife right, and ought his girls to have more advantages? All these thoughts passed through his brain that evening when he went as usual out of

the front door to the bridge, where he could see the placid waters of the Pool. Summer or winter, wet or fine, Mr. Kestell always walked out to the bridge after wishing his wife good-night. Sometimes he only stayed a minute; sometimes, if the evening were fine, or the moon shining, he would stop a little while.

The autumn evening was perfect; the moon bright and soft; a little thin cloud was stretching right across her face like a man's hand trying to hide her beauty. The Pool was placid and still; only now and then a water-rat splashed in from the bank, or a moor-hen was disturbed.

Mr. Kestell was not thinking of beauty as he stood there. For beauty to affect us we must have a heart free from care, and bring our offering of a calm spirit to her shrine.

Suddenly he turned, and then, close beside him, stood Amice. Mr. Kestell was startled for half a second. He had not heard her coming. And then he was angry with her for startling him; and yet he would not have owned to either feeling for the world.

"You, Amice? Won't you catch cold?"

As well as frightening her father, however, it seemed that Amice was herself nervous. The hand that held her white shawl trembled.

"Elva is playing, papa; so I thought I would tell you before I forgot——"

Yes, across the narrow strip of lawn at the side of the house came the sounds of a piano, full-toned and well-played. But to-night the strains were melancholy.

"Forgot what, Amice?"

Mr. Kestell did not alter his tone, which was gentle and kind. Still Amice hesitated. She hardly knew herself; only

she was afraid of her father, and he could not bear to see this fear. How different from Elva's love and confidence!

"I forgot to mention that Symee told me that her brother's holiday was to begin to-morrow. I went down to the farm to-day, and asked Mrs. Deepröse to get his room ready as usual."

"Oh yes, of course, of course. Still, my dear, you might have mentioned it earlier in the day; I would have gone down myself to see that everything was ready."

Mr. Kestell was returning hastily to the house, and Amice was by his side. She had on her simple evening dress of white serge, and was not given to being fashionable, having, as Miss Heaton put it, "much too flowing ideas about dress for a girl who went to church."

Mr. Kestell was not a man who understood fashion in female attire; but he knew that Elva always looked well-dressed, and, like other people, only nicer, whilst Amice was always strangely attired, he knew not in what.

"Jesse Vicary is easily satisfied; besides, he feels quite at home at the farm. What I wanted to add, papa, if you will not mind—might we not let Symee go there, too, for a few days? Mrs. Deepröse can put her up; and for a little while she would be happy with her brother all alone."

"But, my dear Amice, your mother—what will she say?"

"I can take Symee's place—I am sure I can; mamma is accustomed to my doing things for her."

"Not at all suitable. And, indeed, I don't know—"

They entered the drawing-room, where Elva was playing; but she jumped up as she saw them coming in.

"Papa, isn't it good of Amice? I told her to go and ask you. You must agree; think of the pleasure they will have. I'm sure, if Amice and I were separated nearly all the year, we should want to be quite—quite alone for a long, long time."

"Settle it among yourselves," said Mr. Kestell, quietly; "but I insist on your mother's wishes being first consulted. Now sing something, one of you, before I go to my study. I have some work to-night."

Mr. Kestell sat down with the paper; but he saw Amice shake her head when Elva tried to make her sing. So it was Elva who entertained him; and her sweet,

clear voice, so full of joy and hope, made him forget the annoyance he felt at Amice's request.

When he was gone, the two girls were left alone, and then it was that Amice appeared gradually to thaw, like a winter flower brought into a warm room. There was a little sigh of relief when at last she went up to Elva, who was gazing out of the one window which was allowed not to be shut.

Elva was thinking over Walter Akister's words, and wishing she had not been out alone upon the moor; but she was recalled to the present by Amice's arm round her neck, and feeling a kiss imprinted on her forehead.

"Oh, Elva, darling, don't have anything to do with him; he would make you unhappy."

Elva visibly started.

"With whom?"

"Walter Akister; I know you are thinking of him."

Elva, for the first time in her life, looked at her sister with a troubled look in her eyes.

"Amice, dear, what do you mean? How could you tell? Did papa—"

Amice knelt down, and hid her face in her sister's shoulder.

"Don't ask me any questions, dearest, I shall have to answer you, and I don't want to. It is not my fault, perhaps it is because we are sisters; I have read of it in books, I think, but sometimes it frightens me myself. Don't be angry, Elva—that would only add to my misery."

"Angry with you, Amice—how could I be? We have shared everything together, haven't we, ever since we were tinies? But this one thing I thought I ought not to tell you, and then you—you—come and tell it to me. I don't understand."

Amice rose up and stood close to the window, the strange, weird light falling on her, and making her deathly-pale features appear almost supernatural.

"I don't wonder," she said, clasping her hands, "that you do not understand it. I do not either. Do you remember the evening of Mrs. Eagle Bennison's dinner-party? Well, it was then it came to me for the first time. I had been thinking of all the great things women have done for the good of others, and I wanted to be like them in the least particular. I seemed to wish to give up all these riches that surround us, and which every day made me love poverty the more;

and then, after a long time— Oh, dear Elva, keep my secret; tell no one, promise me."

Elva nodded her head, silently.

"It was then, as I knelt on the floor, lost in thought, that a new, strange feeling came over me. I cannot explain it; but I seemed to see things differently. I seemed to understand what others were feeling, not by word or picture, but by some sense that was quite different from anything I had ever known before. I felt that Symee was upstairs suffering and wanted me, and I went, and then—I was frightened myself to find it was true."

"But about Mr. Akister," said Elva, still inclined to think that Amice was ill; and that she had over-tired herself with tramping about to the cottages.

"That came suddenly; because it is not always with me this power, or gift, or curse. It comes and goes, and I am afraid of it; afraid of using it wrongly; afraid of despising it if it is a gift of Heaven. Elva, never tell any one."

"I never will," said Elva, feeling that, if she did, some might pronounce her sister mad. "I believe you have been over-tiring yourself, and worrying about—being too good, I think. I never feel like that. I love everything that I can enjoy, and I cannot see the harm of it."

"No, no; not for you. Don't think I am blaming you, Elva. How could I, when I love you more than any one on earth? Perhaps it is love that is teaching me. I seem to read your thoughts just now, just as if you had spoken aloud."

Elva did not believe this, though she was forced to acknowledge that Amice was right about Walter Akister; but the whole thing was so strange, so uncanny, that she put away the belief in it. The only true thing was that her sister Amice was too good, and wanted to be taken out more among other people.

"I was thinking of Walter Akister, it is true; but what else could you see, you naughty thought-reader?"

Amice smiled now. Elva took the revelation in such a matter-of-fact manner that she was a little comforted.

"Nothing except that Walter Akister was wanting you to do something, and that you were wavering, and I felt I must speak and tell you to be firm."

Elva laughed brightly now, as she kissed Amice.

"'Second thoughts are best,' is the saying; so first thoughts may be wrong, and

yours are wrong, quite wrong. Walter Akister did ask me something this afternoon; but I never had the slightest idea of saying 'Yes,' and I never, never shall. Set your mind at rest about that, and don't believe these pictures."

Amice was not hurt or offended, only relieved. She tried to put away the idea of harm to Elva—that was all she cared about.

"But about Symee—how could I have known?" she added after a moment.

"Why, Amice, you are always thinking that some one or other wants you, and worrying your brains about people in trouble. It is fortunate that we live together, or you would soon be ruined. By the way, have you spent all your allowance? You will want a new dress soon. Papa, I saw, noticed the shabby serge, though he said nothing."

"Did he? I am sorry. I have spent every penny. That old Jeffery Hull has been so long out of work that I lent him some."

"Papa or Mr. Heaton would have done it. Oh, dear Amice, you ought to have no money!"

"I wish I had none. How it would help one to be good to be obliged to earn one's daily bread. Think of all the people who have no capital. What would Catherine of Sienna have said to have been rich? She never could have been."

"Oh, dear Amice, that was all very well for those days; people admired rags, and visions, and miracles then; but now nobody does really. It's much nicer to be very rich and give great sums to build People's Palaces, and Markets, and things of that sort, than to go about looking saintly. You know doctors only put it down to want of nerve-power, or morbid feelings; so it's no use at all. Then, Amice, don't mind if I say something else. I wish you wouldn't look so shy and frightened when you speak to papa. He is so dear and good he pretends not to see it; but I know his nature, and he does. He is so good to us that I can't bear his feelings being hurt."

Amice had begun her slow pacing by the drawing-room windows; there was such a hush everywhere this evening that the low, soft footfall of the girl was almost ghostly.

"I can't help it," she said, covering her face. "Elva, you don't know how hard I try to be quite, quite natural with him. This evening, when I went out on the

bridge, I said I would speak to him as I did to you or to mamma; but, directly I came near to him, it all came over me and overpowered me."

"What came over you?" said Elva, quickly.

"That—I mean shyness, I suppose. Just as if I were being paralysed. It is worse than fear; oh, it is misery!"

Evidently, Amice could not be well, and Elva formed a plan of taking her to a doctor; but, once again, with her strong vitality and strength of will, Elva changed the conversation.

"Anyhow, it's all right about Symee. Have you told her? Jesse Vicary comes to-morrow! How he will enjoy the country after that terrible, stuffy London. I wonder if he has seen Mr. Hoel Fenner again. Now, Amice, come and sing that song you set to music the other evening. Instead of moping you ought to be a prima donna. Oh dear, I wish you had taken a fancy to the stage, you would have looked lovely, and it's easier for ladies now to sing in public than to get rid of all their money, as you wish to do."

Amice laughed softly. She was very fascinating when she looked at all happy.

"What a terrible idea; I would rather die than go behind footlights. Think of the power of all those hundreds of eyes."

"Yes, the power to applaud—I should like that."

"I would rather sing in the dirtiest room in a back slum than in a theatre," and Amice, sitting down, sang, in a rich and wondrously soft contralto, the following well-known words, which she had set to music:

"When shall I see the land where I would tread,
That shrine where I would fain bow knee and head?
In autumn—ere the autumn pass, I said;
In winter—ere the winter time is sped;
In spring—ere yet spring's fair sweet feet are fled;
In summer—ere the summer time is shed—
And now I say, perchance when I am dead."

"Amice, how beautiful!" exclaimed her sister. "Will you sing it to papa, to-morrow?"

Amice rose abruptly.

"Don't ask me, don't ask me to do that. I can't help it; but when papa comes near to me at the piano—sometimes even when he is only in the room—my voice goes. It is stupid, but how can one help being afraid? If only I were like you, and could be a comfort to him."

It was useless arguing, and Elva gave it up. She only knew that she herself loved Amice, and felt anxious about her state

of health; but it was hard that the two she loved the best could so little understand each other.

CHAPTER X. COUNTRY BORN.

THE Home Farm was situated on the right hand of the Pools, and some way up the moor on the opposite side of the Beacon; and was, in fact, at the edge of the great hills before described as the Forest of Alden. All the farm land had originally been reclaimed from the moor; and certainly nothing could exceed the wild beauty of its surroundings, though it left much to be desired in point of fertility. However, some of these upland meadows produced fair pasture for the sleek Alderneys; and money being plentiful, the farm served its purpose well, and gave an honest living to Eli Deepprose and his wife Hannah. The farm-house was an old picturesque dwelling, with gables and stacks of chimneys which pointed to the days when it had been the manor, when manors were by no means the palatial places they have since become.

The way to the farm was up a narrow valley branching off from the road by the Pools. A little stream meandered sluggishly on one side, and on the other sloping fir-woods and larch-plantations made eternal music. Then the ground rose more precipitously, and the wood being past, the path now ran by a few meadows and cornfields—the harvest at present not yet gathered in—diversified by here and there a hop-garden. Then, further still, the farm buildings, with its old garden and its stack-yard, its cow-sheds, and pig-styes; and after this, high up, came the always rising stretch of forest-land, till the eye reached the summit where, high above the farm, stood the Crow's Nest clump, apparently lording it over all the lower lands as an eagle aloft upon mountain crags.

Every noble feeling seemed to be fostered by that special spot, and the noble desire for freedom was firmly implanted in the heart of the dwellers of the soil by the vast sweep of those grand high moors, which spoke to the heart of man of the purest and highest self-respect, and of giving him, with the breath of his nostrils, the command to labour honestly for his daily bread, and by the sweat of his brow to learn true freedom and true patriotism.

"Who would not be country-born, country-bred, in such a spot?"

Such was Jesse Vicary's feeling as, finding himself, by a miracle it seemed to him, at Greystone, he took his modest bag in his hand, and walked with eager, fervent impatience to the farm. He had been born among those moors; his earliest recollections were entwined with happy memories of the woods, of the deep pools in their exquisite valley, of the farm sounds and sights and works; and, best of all, of all those miles and miles of the moorland-forest, which seemed, like eternity, to have no end.

The moment Jesse set foot in his county, though no parent voice was there to welcome him, and no home of his own awaited him, he felt happy, he could throw off the feeling of his life's burden; he could forget that such things as sin and misery existed; he could fancy no such place as London existed, and no such street as Golden Sparrow knew him. He experienced the intoxication of nature, the feeling that earth called to him as her own, and that he answered her by saying, as in old schoolboy days, "Adsum."

Once more now he came gladly to her call, and only those who have experienced this feeling can understand what was the tumultuous joy that filled his whole being as he at last passed the grey walls of Rushbrook House.

It was late afternoon, and being now so near his destination, Jesse sat down on an old bent oak-bough, where, quite hidden from view, he could see the house and the old bridge without being seen, should any of the Kestells come out.

Jesse felt a vague hope that Symee might feel his near presence, and would run out for a moment; he had not been able to tell her his train, and he was too shy to go to the house, having, besides, an undefined dislike of going to any one's back door, and not sure whether, his sister being merely a servant, he might assert his independence by going to the front entrance. He preferred doing neither; and, well hidden, he gazed longingly at the familiar sight.

The old bridge stood in the midst of trees and undergrowth; a shallow brook, spanned by its great arch—one side of which was rough and uneven from the falling away of some masonry; whilst the remaining weather-stained grey stones were crested with dark-green ivy—trickled slowly, making music like the ringing of tiny silver bells. Below and above one only saw a tangle of boughs, through which

the sunlight glinted here and there, just flecking the little brown stream beneath with spots of gold.

How Jesse devoured all this with his eyes, and his heart seemed to thank Heaven, with the sincerity of a man receiving a priceless gift, for once more beholding all this with his bodily eyes. He gazed at the water, which quietly trickled towards him between its moss-grown banks and the moss-covered stones in its bed. The fields outside were bathed in sunlight, but the oaks and silver birches around him almost hid the blue sky; whilst, behind, the tall, red stems of the fir-wood stood like guarding sentinels.

Jesse listened; there was no sound but the voice of the stream, a few notes of a bird, and, all at once, the bark of a dog.

He looked up to the bridge, feeling he must pass on, when suddenly he saw some one standing there.

Jesse, though he at once identified Miss Amice Kestell, said to himself that he had never seen such a beautiful woman before. He took in every line of the head, of the neck, of the arm leaning on the bridge. He noted the pale, marble-like face, and the eyes, cast downward to the stream, so that they seemed almost closed. He even noted the white hat, with a great, grey ostrich-feather, which looked like a little soft, grey cloud that had floated down to rest like an aureole round that head. But, most of all, Jesse noted the wondrously-calm expression, as if no thought of earth were troubling the dreamer.

It was not love that made all his pulses quicken at this sight; not any earthly idea of common love came even into his mind; it was more like worship given to some angelic being, which might suddenly appear on our path.

Doubtless these feelings were partly engendered by Symee's repeated praises of Miss Amice; doubtless, at this moment, his grateful heart glorified every object he saw; perhaps, too, Nature refuses to show her best unless she can place a beautiful jewel in her most lovely setting. Whatever might be the natural reasons of the sudden transformation and the immediate result of sight upon feeling, certain it is that not stronger was the effect of the sight of Beatrice upon Dante than of Amice Kestell upon this unknown, unendowed Jesse Vicary.

Jesse was so utterly overcome with this new feeling that, even when Amice passed on, after a few minutes' meditation on the bridge, he sat on, gazing at the place

where she had been; and when at last he rose and climbed up the path and himself crossed the bridge, he would, had he not feared being seen, have kissed the footprint Amice had made on the sandy way. Jesse did nothing of the kind, however; but he passed the Rushbrook property, passed up the valley, turned into the track leading to the farm, and, always ascending, reached it, without having been once conscious of anything but the image of Amice upon his mind's eye.

In sight of the familiar homestead, however, he partially recovered himself. You cannot go into a house dreaming. The ordinary commonplaces of common life are powerful restoratives to distraction; and, with a mighty effort, Jesse shook off his new bliss.

All at once he was entirely roused, for, at the open door, and running towards him with a glad exclamation, was his own twin sister, Symee.

There was no one in the house; every one was out, busy at various farm labours. Mrs. Deeprise was in the dairy, on the other side of the farm-house, and only the eyes of Nature beheld the meeting.

"Oh, Jesse, Jesse, there you are. I thought you would never come."

"How could I guess you were here?" said Jesse, now quite himself, for Symee was his second self—no vision—but the twin sister he was looking for. "Do you know, Symee, I sat down opposite Rushbrook House, hoping you might come out by chance."

"Oh, you stupid boy! and all the time I was here. Why didn't you guess it?"

"How could I expect they would spare you?"

Symee, still clinging to him, laughed as she had not laughed since she had last seen him, and her sweet, gentle, though not beautiful or remarkable face, was beautified by love.

"Well, if it had not been for Miss Amice, you would not have seen me here. Isn't she good, Jesse? She asked Mrs. Kestell to spare me, and came down here herself to arrange about my staying at the farm; and, just imagine, she is going to take my place. She did it all so kindly; not a bit as if she were doing me a favour, but just as if it were my right."

"She is an angel," said Jesse, from the bottom of his heart.

"Well, something very like it. She is not like any other young lady I have ever seen. But now tell me—oh, tell me

everything, only first come in, tea is ready on the table and the kettle is boiling. Oh, Jesse, this is happiness."

What a thousand little nothings these two said to each other as they sat by the homely table, eating their modest meal, which, to Jesse, tasted sweet indeed after his long, hot summer of London life. Symee asked him about his work, his friends, his acquaintances, interspersed now and then with enquiries about his wardrobe, the new shirts she was making him, the careless fashion in which he tied his tie; and he, delighted to hear a woman's soft voice taking him to task in this manner, laughed and defended himself, till, tea finished, he insisted on taking her out upon the moors, after first paying a visit to Mrs. Deeprise in her dairy. The Deeprise pair had only been a few years at the farm, and were not the couple Jesse remembered in his childhood; still, they were good friends enough, and just on those pleasant terms when nothing is expected on one side or the other but pleasant words. Jesse always paid for his lodging and board in spite of Mr. Kestell's repeated orders to the contrary; but the pleasure of feeling independent was too great, now it was attained, to be easily parted with.

Now walking up towards the Crow's Nest, whilst the shadows were lengthening and the clouds deepening into gorgeous crimson in the west, it was Jesse's turn to tell his sister of his good fortune.

"I have sent in my work, Symee," he exclaimed, after having told her of Mr. Fenner's visit; "and it may lead to some more work, but I dare not think of that. Perhaps he will write to me here. I gave him my address. Anyhow, it seems like a new life. I want to write something more congenial than those eternal tons of coals."

Their feet were pressing down the springy heather; the breeze gathering energy as they climbed higher, brought new strength to Jesse's hopes. Any feet that have been born to tread on heather will never again forget the feeling; the very muscular exertion required where the heather is thick and high is joy to such; the black peat ruts, the little gleaming pools, the crisp, dead branches of twig, the searching for the hidden sundew, the colour of the asphodel, and the scent of the bog myrtle, all these, and a hundred other sights on a moor, go to make up that heather-sickness, which seizes the Scotch when far from home, or the

dwellers of the Surrey heaths when they wander into towns or upon down lands.

Oh, downs are beautiful, and many wonderful things can be seen there; but all these can be easily dispensed with by heath-lovers if you will give them back their forest.

For a few moments Symee shared her brother's hopes and feelings. He had so much more powerful a nature that it was easy to drag her along with him, spiritually speaking; but every human being has a certain amount of power of resistance; otherwise strange sights would be seen: armies of pilgrims going to the same place; numberless panics; slavish imitations; but to prevent this the force of the unit comes in; and, just before they reached Crow's Nest, Symee paused.

"Jesse, dear, you don't mean to say you would forget all Mr. Kestell has done, and that you would forsake the coals?"

Symee was good and gentle; but, in spite of her unit force, she was not imaginative. Coals seemed to her sufficient to warm any one's energy.

"Coals of fire you think Mr. Kestell would heap on my head? What can it matter to him what I do, so that I earn an honest living? I do not want to do more than that—a living for you and for me."

"But I am sure Mr. Kestell would not like it. He seemed quite anxious the other day about your keeping steadily to your present work."

"Don't be afraid, Symee; I shall do nothing rash. But without saying anything disrespectful—though I never can forget what I owe him, yet I am a man now, and I must be free. Heaven gives us a certain freedom in our lives, in order to make us understand the true bondage, I think."

He spoke in a brave voice, which denoted strength and honesty of purpose, so that Symee was a little reassured.

"You must not speak of me as if I were going to take all your hard-earned savings, Jesse, dear," she added, as they proceeded higher. "You must marry and be happy, and I shall come and stay with you. Oh, that will be great enough happiness for me."

"Marry!" Jesse shook his head. "I could not marry unless I saw a woman who would come up to my ideas of 'a perfect woman, nobly planned,' as Wordsworth says. And just imagine, Symee, what such a woman would say to me!"

Jesse laughed, but not bitterly.

"She would say, if she were worth anything, that you were better than any one else in the world."

"No one will ever say that but you, silly one."

And then the silence of the hills fell upon the brother and sister.

"THE CHILD OF THE OCEAN"

(THE YANGTSE-KIANG).

ACCORDING to the Chefoo Convention of 1875, the city of Chung-King on the upper Yangtse-Kiang—"The Child of the Ocean"—greatest of the rivers of China, is to be declared an open Treaty Port, as soon as a steamer reaches it from the sea. For over two years Mr. Archibald Little has had a specially-built vessel waiting at Shanghai for the necessary Imperial permit to make the ascent. Time after time he has been put off, on one trivial pretext after another; but really because of the intrigues of the local mandarins, who fear the loss of their monopoly of local transit dues—called Likin—when the river traffic passes into the hands of Europeans. But the difficulties are, while we write, believed to have been overcome to this extent, that an order has been issued from Peking to allow the steamer to proceed.

It is because the voyage of this steamer will mean the beginning of a new era in China, and of a new departure in our Oriental commerce, that we propose to give a short sketch of the Yangtse-Kiang and its potentialities.

From Shanghai, the metropolis of the coast, to Chung-King, the commercial metropolis of Western China, is a distance of some fourteen hundred miles. The first thousand miles can be accomplished in a week, for the waters of the lower Yangtse have been, since 1860, ploughed by a service of magnificent steamers as far as Hankow—about six hundred miles—and from Hankow to Ichang there are smaller Chinese steamers. But the second stretch of four hundred miles, from Ichang to Chung-King, occupies six times as long as the thousand miles from Shanghai to Ichang. It has to be performed in native boats, which boats have to be hauled by manual labour over a succession of some nine or ten rapids, which begin to break the course of the river just above Ichang.

At the foot of each rapid there is a small village, whose inhabitants make their living by hauling the junks into quiet

water—a haulage varying in length from half a mile to a mile and a half. On the downward voyage the junks run free and swiftly with the rapid current; but the dangers from curves, sunken rocks, and whirlpools are numerous, and the wrecks of native boats frequent.

Why then attempt this difficult water-way? Because the Yangtse is practically the sole line of communication between the east and west of the great Empire of China. It is an Empire without roads, and which depends for the transport of goods upon its waterways. Now, the Yangtse River divides China Proper into two equal parts, and it is fed by innumerable tributaries navigable by boats of some kind, and these tributaries, again, are fed by smaller streams coming from the very remotest regions of the country. This network of streams intersects in every direction the very richest portions of China, including the fertile and metalliferous province of Szechuen, which is reputed one of the most densely-populated provinces of the Empire. In fact, the country tapped by the Yangtse is of such peculiar attractiveness, from a commercial and industrial point of view, that in the remote city of Chung-King—which is its centre—the native bankers and merchants are among the wealthiest of their class in China.

The great dream of our traders for many years, has been to reach Chung-King by some speedier and better method than that available by the country junks. The trade of Shanghai multiplied four times within a very few years after Hankow was opened to Europeans; so it is possible to entertain, with reason, very large expectations of the consequences which will follow the opening-up of Chung-King, connected by water as that city is with almost every part of Western China. The traffic by the junks is subject to the heavy extortions of the local authorities, under the name of "Likin;" but by our Treaty rights these dues will not be exacted on goods conveyed by British steamers, right up from the sea to Chung-King.

The point which Mr. Little set himself, some four years ago, to examine, was whether it is possible for steamers to make the passage of the gorges and the rapids safely. He was so convinced of the practicability that he came right home to England, and had a vessel built on the Clyde, to his own designs, for the peculiar character of the navigation—which requires

a boat of great power, light draught, and easy and rapid handling.

But now as to these gorges and rapids, for a description of which we are indebted both to Mr. Little, who published an account of his travels last year, and to Mr. W. Spencer Percival, who devotes some chapters in his recent work about "The Land of the Dragon" to notes on a boating and shooting excursion on the upper Yangtse.

The Chinese know the Yangtse as the Kiang, "The River;" or as Chang-Kiang, "The Long River;" or as Ta-Kiang, "The Great River." Its more poetical name is that by which we know it, and which means "The Child of the Ocean." It is a monster child, for it has a flow of about three thousand miles, and in its lower courses is of immense width. But for two-thirds of its length the river runs through almost a continuous ravine, the banks of which are no wider than the river-bed. It is at the first gorge, just above Ichang, that the river leaves the mountains for ever on its way to the sea. This first gorge is one thousand miles from the mouth. From the first gorge, the ascent is by a series of wide steps, which the Chinese call Menkah, over which flow the famous rapids. These steps lead through great gorges cut through the limestone ranges which bound Szechuen on the east, and divide it from Hupeh, the Province of Broad Lakes. These limestone mountains are cut up by ravines in every direction; for every little stream has its gorge, often more picturesque, even if less imposing, than those of the great river itself. The vegetation of this well-watered country is most luxuriant, with endless varieties of ferns, and innumerable species of lovely flowering-plants.

Ichang is pretty much of what the Americans would call a "one-horse" place, and the British Consul there has to maintain what dignity he can in a very dilapidated and unofficial-looking building. Opposite the city the view is bold and picturesque—pyramid-shaped hills, with high, vertical cliffs, along the river-front, backed by a lofty range of mountains, extending to the distant horizon; neat villages and temples in groves of willow and bamboo; and the swift-flowing river in the foreground.

Ichang is famous for its otter-fisheries, of which Mr. Little gives the following note: "The opposite shore rises in pyramidal cliffs, separated by steep, narrow valleys, which just admit of a landing on

the rocks, the conglomerate formation observed lower down shading off here into hard sandstone. Attached to the rocky shore, in a small bay sheltered somewhat from the violence of the current, the fishermen have their otter station. From the bank, and overhanging the water, depend small bamboos, like fishing-rods, to the extremity of each of which is attached an otter by an iron chain, fixed to leather thongs, crossed round the animal's chest, and immediately behind the shoulders. Some of the animals were playing in the water, and swimming as far as the length of their tether would allow them; others had hung themselves across their bamboos, resting, doubled up, and looking for all the world like otter-skins hung up to dry in the sun. When required for use, the fisherman, after casting his net, which is heavily loaded all round the foot, draws up its long neck to the water-level, and inserts the otter through the central aperture; the otter then routs out the fish from the muddy bottom and rocky crevices in which they hide. Fish, otter, and net are then all hauled on board together; the otter is released and rewarded; and a fresh cast is made."

There is a gorge called the Tiger's Teeth, some ten miles below Ichang; but the first of the series of those associated with the rapids, is some few miles above the city. Suddenly it bursts on the sight: a cleft in the mountain, out of which the Great River flows in majestic grandeur. The view and the surprise that burst upon one for the first time are, says Mr. Little, indescribable, and no pen can paint the beauty and impressiveness of the panorama that slowly unrolls as the boat is propelled through the gorge. The water is from fifty to a hundred fathoms deep, and is undisturbed by ripple or by other sound than that of the boatmen. An awful stillness broods over the scene, and clouds envelope the higher peaks along the sides of the chasm. These peaks are in striking forms: resembling now a tower and now a buttress, and everywhere vegetation takes advantage of the smallest ledge; and the air is scented with the odour of innumerable blossoms.

Through these gorges the river rushes with great velocity, and, owing to the height of the cliffs, the sails are useless. Therefore, the boats have to be tracked. A big junk, of one hundred and fifty tons. Mr. Little tells us, will carry a crew of over one hundred men, seventy or eighty

of whom will be trackers, whose movements are directed by beat of drum. The drummer remains on board, under the direction of the helmsman; as well as a dozen to twenty men whose duty is to pole and to fend the boat off the boulders and rocky points as she scrapes along. Some half-dozen of the crew are told off to skip over the rocks like cats in constant attendance on the tow-line, to lift it when it gets caught in the rocks. Other three or four run along without clothing, ready to jump into the water at a moment's notice should the line get caught on a rock inaccessible from the shore.

These tow-lines are made of plaited bamboo, extremely tough and strong, and better adapted, by the smooth surface, than hempen rope would be for such haulage; but, notwithstanding this, a tow-line only lasts a single voyage.

When a critical point to be rounded is reached, one part of the crew jump ashore, and the others remain on board to pole and fend. "The helmsman meanwhile takes care to keep her as much as possible head-on to the current, and shouts to the trackers when to haul, and when to slacken. Oftentimes at the most critical moment, the manœuvres are compromised by the tow-rope catching in an almost inaccessible crevice, when we hang in a most uncomfortable position until one of the trackers runs back, climbs with his bare feet, cat-like, up the rocks, and, apparently at the risk of his life, releases us. Then when we have safely reached the comparatively smooth water, if the banks are precipitous, the whole crew jump on board and claw us along under the overhanging cliffs, two men clinging on to the rocks with their hooks, while two others, with poles, keep her off a safe distance from them. The hookers have to be mighty careful never to lose their hold, as that involves drifting back into the current, and bringing up some distance below, losing in a minute or two the fruits of hours of work."

It is dangerous and exciting navigation, and what Mr. Little decided was, that what could be done by sixty or seventy men hauling and wasting much power in shouting and jumping, could be much more effectually and quickly done by a full-powered stern-wheel steamer, of small draught, and suitable beam.

The Ichang Gorge is the first, and is about twelve and a half miles long. Then comes the Lukan Gorge, three miles, the Mitán, three and a half, and the Wushan,

twenty-two miles, respectively. The rapids between Ichang and Chung-King are ten in number, and have all to be surmounted somewhat in the manner described. The scenery of the gorges is all of the same grand and imposing character.

About midway through the Wushan Gorge is a deep, narrow cleft in the mountains, which marks the boundary-line between the provinces of Hupeh and Szechuen. It is a lonely, desolate place, with a few cottages planted on the smallest ledges on the rocky sides of the mountain. The natives of this gorge, Mr. Percival says, are so imbued with the gloom of the place, that they never laugh, seldom smile, and never talk excepting when necessary; and then as few words as possible.

Opening out from the river at various points are the most lovely and picturesque glens, which Mr. Percival spent much time in exploring. Here is a picture of one, which is fairly representative of the whole:

"After ascending through all its windings and inclinations for two or three miles, the glen sometimes widening into a large amphitheatre, at other times drawing into a narrow opening, we come to one of the most enchanting valleys I had ever seen—a perfect paradise, covered with ferns, flowers, and orchids.

"It was a lovely afternoon; a clear, mottled sky overhead, and between that and the horizon a bank of most gracefully-formed and majestic cumuli, that cast warmly-tinted shadows down the valley. Nothing was wanting, nothing could have been added to increase the loveliness of the scene. Like most of the glens, it was not more than a couple of hundred yards wide. The roads rose up on either side to a height of over a thousand feet, with ledges here and there invisible from below, but which were actually about one hundred feet wide, covered with different kinds of timber and flowering-plants of the most delicate and brilliant colours. A clear stream of the purest water ran down the hollow of the glen, broken in various places by a succession of falls, the highest not more than fifty feet, about which skimmed some lovely birds, such as I had never seen before. From the thickest parts—in the undergrowth of this wilderness of beauty, where the ferns and flowering-plants were most abundant—we turned out some magnificent Gold and Silver pheasants, and also the still more beautiful bird, the Reeve,

pheasant. There you see them in all their brightness of plumage and comeliness of form and movement; in all the pride of freedom, and in all the fearless confidence of a happy, wild existence."

As all travellers concur in rapturous descriptions of the scenery of the Upper Yangtse, it is possible to imagine that when steamers begin to ply regularly, it will be a favourite resort of the more adventurous of the tourist tribe. Even the danger of shooting the rapids has its charm, and the sportsman has the prospect of shooting a good deal more, for there seems plenty of game.

An occasional leopard may be met with, in which case the traveller would do well to be better provided than was Mr. Percival, who, encountering suddenly one of these spotted creatures, had to resort to yells of "yoicks!" in order to frighten it away. He succeeded, but it was a "near thing."

Up one of the glens the rock becomes a clear, vertical precipice, some twelve hundred feet high. Midway, in the face of the cliff is a cave, with no apparent means of access. But a curious footpath has been cut to it up the face of the rock, for this cave is a gigantic temple, inhabited by a number of priests in charge of a hundred joss-images.

"The interior of the temple is both curious and picturesque, and its extraordinary situation most remarkable. Situated about midway in a vertical rock, upwards of a thousand feet high, with no possible approach from the outside, the only entrance being by the winding, tortuous path up the back of the mountain, terminating in a narrow ledge hewn out of the cliff, in a vast wilderness of mountains, which few foreigners have ever seen. In the interior there hangs from the roof some huge stalactites, many feet in length, while numerous others, both large and small, run up the sides of the cavern like pillars, from the floor to the roof. Round the sides are many recesses in the walls, into which, at different degrees of elevation, have been placed many josses, both of good and bad qualities, each occupying his own particular compartment."

Near Ichang there is a fine waterfall—not on the river—which takes an unbroken leap of eight hundred feet. There also is the cavern of the Dragon King, in which is a vast subterranean lake of unknown depth, and extending right into the heart of the mountain. This lake is the feature of the

district, its subdued light at the entrance gradually darkening, and ending in the most pitchy blackness, as you try to make your gaze pierce the far-away depths of the cavern. "Its deathlike stillness," says Mr. Percival, "and the uncanny, soft, and attractive appearance of the water, combined with its unknown size and unfathomed depth, makes it one of the terrors of the superstitious Chinese. Of course the resident priests tell you that no one ever comes out again, who is foolhardy enough to venture in; but this is the same old story you hear from them everywhere regarding caves and unknown holes, of whose further recesses little or nothing is known, and as the Buddhist priests hold considerable influence over the people, of course no one ever does go in, each one implicitly believing the priests' assertion, and so the mystery and superstition are preserved."

This subterranean lake will, doubtless, recall to the reader Coleridge's dream of where

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man,
Down to a sunless sea.

The city of Chung-King, at the upper end of the gorges, and the objective point of Mr. Little's efforts to establish steam communication, is a picturesque place. From whichever point you regard the city, Mr. Little says, the view is one of interest and variety; each aspect forming a new picture of rock, river, wood, and temple, crenellated battlements and up-lifted roofs, crowded with bewildering detail. It is a large and magnificent-looking city; but, like all Chinese towns, will not bear close inspection.

A feature of this part of the country is the absence both of plain and of barren hill, every inch of land being either under cultivation or wooded—except round about the towns, where the cemeteries take up more room than the houses.

A British Consular Agent has, since the murder of Augustus Margary, resided at Chung-King; and there, also, are stations of the American Methodist, the China Inland, and the Roman Catholic Missions. The latter claims some three thousand converts in the city alone.

The idea is that when Chung-King is thoroughly opened to European traders, it will become a second Shanghai. The agricultural wealth of the provinces of

Szechuen and Yunnan is enormous, and the people are most industrious. The mineral resources are also very great. The traffic conducted by the native junks, up and down the river, is already large; but the dangers and length of the journey, the many risks to cargo and life, and the extortions of some eight or ten local custom-houses, put a heavy premium upon it. When steamers are allowed to run upon the upper Yangtse, the produce of the country will be brought in ever-increasing quantity to Chung-King, and, in return, a vast market will be opened up for British manufactures.

In short, the Yangtse-Kiang is not only one of the most picturesque rivers in the world, but it presents the especial interest of being the coming medium of an enormous addition to the commerce of the nations.

ABOUT SOME ALLEGORICAL BOOKS.

THE mediæval mind took a strange delight in the invention of allegories; though, probably, there is no field of literary effort in which success is so rare, and failure so frequent. None but a very rich and fertile genius can cultivate it with advantage; can make it bear a harvest which it is worth the while of the reader to gather in. Nothing more tedious is there in prose or verse—not even an indifferent parody—than an indifferent allegory; and yet, as I have hinted, allegories are generally indifferent. It is only now and then that a Spenser produces a "Faerie Queen," or a Bunyan a "Pilgrim's Progress," or an Addison so delicate a piece of work as a "Vision of Mirza." An allegory is apt to run away with its author, like an ill-conditioned steed, and to involve him in dismal swamps and sloughs of despond from which he is unable to escape; thereby justifying, though in a sense she never intended, Mrs. Malaprop's celebrated simile: "Headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile." Yet there is something fascinating, no doubt, about this form of composition; and we suppose the mediæval writers were attracted by the opportunities it afforded for the display of petty ingenuities, and by the pomp and circumstance with which it invests even the barrenest idea. For instance, to say that the contention between Truth and Falsehood is generally arduous and prolonged, but that,

in the long run, Truth will prevail, is a statement of so bold and vague a character, that no reader would give it a moment's consideration. But put it in another form, say that the spotless maiden Aletheia, and the deceitful witch Mendacia, waged war against each other through long ages, in order to gain possession of the fair land of Human Reason, and that the former, assisted by good genii, triumphed, and you construct a fabric of fiction which many passers-by will pause to examine. And this was the artifice of the mediæval writers. It was thus they dressed up their crude ideas; their fantastic sentiments; their favourite platitudes; and, by the aid of allegory, gave them quite a novel and even attractive appearance. They were wise in their generation. In any other shape we may be sure their efforts would never have survived; but, as allegories, they have received respectful treatment, and been handed down from generation to generation to amuse the curiosity of the literary student in his idler hours.

These depreciatory remarks, however, do not apply—at least, without some qualification—to the most celebrated of the mediæval allegories, the "Romaunt de la Rose." Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, flourished Guillaume de Lorris, whom Marot—not very happily—named "The French Ennius." To his lively and prolific fancy, French literature owes the earlier portion of this great allegory, the main theme of which, as he tells us in his opening verse, is the art of love:

Ce est il Romanz de la Roze,
Ou l'art d'amors est tote inclose.

Guillaume de Lorris is supposed to have died about 1261. Forty years after, his poem was taken up and completed by Jean de Meung, who has almost unanimously been accepted as the greatest poet, and one of the finest scholars of his age. The section written by Lorris numbers four thousand and seventy lines. Jean de Meung added fully eighteen thousand, conceived in a much more daring spirit, enriched with truer poetic feeling, and animated by a loftier purpose. "The timid grace of one young poet was followed by the bold wit of another, who was crammed with the scholarship of his time, and poured it out in diffuse illustration of his argument; but who, a man of the people, alive with the stir of his time against polished hypocrisy, annoyed priests with his satire, and court ladies with a

rude estimate of their prevailing character. Underneath all Jean de Meung's part of the 'Romaunt of the Rose' is a religious earnestness that gave its verses currency, and made them doubly troublesome to those who dreaded free thought and full speech."

The action of the poem takes place in a dream, in which the poet is conducted by Idleness to the Palace of Pleasure, where he meets Love and his gay company, who attend him to a bed of roses. He selects one, and is about to gather it, when he is wounded by Cupid's arrow, swoons, and is carried far away from the chosen flower. On his recovery, he determines at all hazards to win his rose; and, after many adventures, ultimately succeeds in reaching it, and is permitted by Venus to touch it with his lips. Then new complications ensue. All the virtues and vices, personified, flit across the stage; the temptations of the world are severally passed in review; and the progress of the soul, towards the fulfilment of its high destiny, is dimly hinted at.

An allegorical poem, very little known, which belongs to the same period, is the "Songe d'Enfer," or Vision of Hell, by Raoul de Houdan. It begins as follows:

"Fables are often revealed by dreams. I dreamed one day that I had become a pilgrim, and, anxious to see some region which no others had visited, resolved on a journey to Hell."

The pilgrim-poet first reaches the town of Covetousness, where he meets with Envy, Avarice, and Rapine. Avarice asks him for news of his subjects, and he replies that Wealth has driven out Liberty, of which only the name is now remembered. Rapine puts a similar question, and is informed that the kingdom which she has established in Poitou is in a flourishing condition; and the poet then goes off into a bitter invective against the Poitevins. Continuing his wandering, he comes upon the abode of Cheater, to whom he puts several questions respecting certain bourgeois of Paris and Chartres, who possessed the secret of always winning at play. The poet passes on to Tavern-town, where he finds Drunkenness, with his son, a native of England—an allusion to the drunken habits of our forefathers which makes one wince. The young man is so robust that he overthrows the strongest. Thence Raoul proceeds to Lewdness, and, finally, arrives at the gates of Hell, which is guarded by Murder, Despair, and Sudden

Death. He is surprised, on entering, to see that the tables are all served, and yet the gate is wide open.

'Tis the great court-day of the King of Hell, who is holding a review of his subjects, including many Bishops, Priests, and Abbés. He makes everybody take a seat at his hospitable board, and before the pilgrim sets a dish of the flesh of a usurer and a black monk; the former of whom had grown fat on other people's property, and the latter on idleness. As Raoul has no liking for such viands, Beelzebub converses with him, enquiring as to the purpose of his journey. Towards the close of the repast his Infernal Majesty calls for his great black book, in which are recorded all the sins that have been or are to be. He put it into the hands of the traveller, who, opening at the chapter "Of Minstrels," finds therein the life of each set forth. "I got it by heart," he says, "and can repeat to you some curious passages." But at this moment he awakes, and dream and story terminate together.

Meschinot, known as le Banni de Liesse, a poet who flourished towards the end of the fifteenth century, composed a collection of poems entitled, "*Les Lunettes des Princes*" (1473)—lunettes, or spectacles, specially designed for the noses of Popes, Emperors, Kings, and Princes, and the author assures us

Que jamais l'œil ne vit telles besicles,

that never has the eye seen such glasses. Reason, perceiving his depression at having lost his fortune, presents him with a little memorandum-book, entitled "Conscience," and then with spectacles intended to facilitate his reading and to render it profitable. On one of them is written "Prudence," on the other "Justice." The ivory framework is named "Strength," and the iron band which unites them "Temperance." In this artificial strain Monsieur Meschinot hobbles through a number of quarto pages.

Among the allegorical works published at different periods were grammars, mystical treatises, pamphlets, and the like. I propose to allude to the most curious.

Guarua, an Italian littérateur of the fifteenth century, is the author of "*Grammaticæ Opus Novum mira quadam arte et compendiosa, sur Bellum Grammaticale.*" After describing the Kingdom of Grammar as governed by two Kings—the Noun and the Verb—the author narrates their struggles for pre-eminence. War breaks out between the two rivals, who take

steps to augment their forces, the one calling to his aid the Adjective and the other the Participle. Victory rests with the Verb; and the Noun prefers to him a request for peace, which is finally concluded through the intervention of some grammarians.

Hoppers, a Dutch juriconsult, published in 1656 his "*Seduardus, sive de vera jurisprudentia*," in twelve books, four of which treat of legislation, four of public rights, and four of civil rights. The work is a kind of drama, which passes on shipboard, and the *dramatis personæ* are the author's four sons.

The first work of the celebrated Neapolitan advocate, Gennaro, is entitled "*Respublica Jurisconsultorum*" (1731). The author imagines the existence of an isle in the Mediterranean, whither all juriconsults repair after death, and where they have founded a commonwealth on the lines of the old Roman Republic; that is, it is divided into the three orders: senators, knights (*equites*), and plebeians. To the first order belong all those juriconsults who lived from Sextus Papirius to Modestinus, under whom the Roman jurisprudence began to decay; to the second, those who since the time of Modestinus have taught the science of law at Rome, Constantinople, and elsewhere, as well as all those authors who, from Alciat down to the eighteenth century, have been distinguished in the study of jurisprudence. And the third includes the Accursi, the Bartolos, and all other juriconsults who have carried into the science a spirit of subtlety and quibbling, or have discussed none but futile, painful, and ridiculous questions. At the time of Gennaro's visit to the island, he pretends that Ulpian and Papinian were consuls; that Cujas was proctor; that Servius Sulpicius presided over the senate, while Cato and Irnerius acted as censors. Notwithstanding the dryness of the subject, the book abounds in humorous allusions and felicitous turns of wit.

To afford the reader some idea of the prevailing tone in mystical allegories, I shall refer to a couple of books by the fanatical Calvinist, William Huntington, S. S., or Sinner Saved, as he lived to subscribe himself. In early life he passed through the successive stages of errand-boy, ostler, gardener, cobbler, and coal-heaver; was "converted;" set forth as an itinerant preacher; rose into repute; and settled down in Gray's Inn Lane, London, as a

popular minister. His works amount to at least a score of volumes, of which I shall notice, first, the one entitled "God the Protector of the Poor and the Banker of the Faith," which is based on the idea that God and Man, by means of faith, carry on a kind of trading. The divine promises are the Christian's bank-notes. A living faith will draw always upon the Divine Banker, who often discharges the bills at sight, and, at all events, much sooner than we have dared to hope. The spirit of prayer, he says, and a pressing need inspire the truly devout mind to address itself to Heaven's inexhaustible treasury. And he adds some narratives to illustrate the living hope and trust of the redeemed sinner, drawing thus upon his Creator; and the Divine Providence condescending, through unexpected windfalls, to honour every kind of draft which comes to Him upon the wings of prayer.

The other book to which I shall allude is "The Voyage," which is a spiritual voyage, made by the author, on board the ship "Grace"—Jesus, Captain; bound for the city of Zion. Frequently buffeted by storms, the ship, nevertheless, doubles safely the Cape of Good Hope; but, when in sight of port, is attacked and captured by the pirate-vessel, "Dissolution," Captain Death in command. At the moment, however, of the pirate's expected triumph, the thunder peals, and Heaven's lightnings smite the "Dissolution" from mast-head to keel; Death sinks in the sea; and the captives disembark, safe and radiant.

One of the most celebrated of the allegorical shadow-lands of the romancist is "Le Pays de Tendre," or Land of Tenderness, created by Mademoiselle de Scudéry, and minutely described in her "Clélie." Sister Clélie is supposed to be explaining a map of it to the Princesse des Léontins:

"The first town, here at the bottom of the map, is New Friendship. As the feeling of tenderness may arise from either one of three different causes—esteem, gratitude, or inclination, the inhabitants, under Clélie's directions, have erected three towns of Tenderness, on three different rivers, each with a separate name, and have devised three different ways of approaching them. So that as men say Cumac on the Ionian Sea, and Cumac on the Tyrrhenian, the people of 'Le Pays de Tendre' say Tenderness-upon-Inclination, Tenderness-upon-Esteem, and Tenderness-upon-Gratitude." Nevertheless, as Clélie took it for granted that the Tenderness which

springs from Inclination needs nothing else to make it what it is, she has not planted any village along the banks of this delightful river, whose current carries you with indescribable swiftness from Friendship to Tenderness. But when you go to Tenderness-upon-Esteem, the case is different; and, accordingly, Clélie has ingeniously established on the route as many villages as there are things great and small which may help to develop from Esteem the Tenderness here indicated. Thus you will perceive that from New Friendship you first proceed to a place called Great Intelligence, because it is this which usually kindles into life the earliest sparks of Esteem. Next, in succession, you observe the three pleasant villages of Pretty-Rhymes, Billet-Galant, and Billet-Doux, which mark the most common operations of Great Intelligence in the early stages of Friendship. Afterwards, to expedite your progress by this route, you pass through Sincerity, Large-Heartedness, Probity, Generosity, Respect, Exactitude, and Goodness, which last lies close by Tenderness. After this, you must return to New Friendship, in order to survey the road which leads to Tenderness-upon-Gratitude. Here observe that the first stage takes you to Complaisance. Next, to a little village named Submission; and then to a charming one, at no great distance, called Little Attentions ("Petits Soins"); whence you proceed to Assiduity, and to yet another village, named Earnestness ("Empressement"); and so on to Great Services, which, in order to indicate how few people render them, is represented as the smallest of all. Afterwards, your road leads to Sensibility; to Obedience; and, finally, to Constant Friendship, which is, no doubt, the safest way to reach the desired goal of Tenderness-upon-Gratitude.

But as there is no road from which one cannot stray, Clélie has so contrived it that if any bound for New Friendship deviate ever so little on either hand, they will get into difficulties. If, on starting from Great Understanding, they turn aside to Negligence, and, afterwards, continuing in the same direction, go on to Inequality, thence to Lukewarmness, to Levity, and to Forgetfulness, they will find themselves, not at Tenderness-upon-Esteem, but at the Lake of Indifference, whose tranquil waters exactly represent the feeling, or want of feeling, after which it is named. On the other hand, if, on setting out from New Friendship, they turn a little to the left,

and wander on to Indiscretion, to Perfidy, to Pride, to Slander or to Malice, they would find themselves, not at Tenderness-upon-Gratitude, but at the Sea of Enmity, where all vessels make shipwreck. The River Inclination falls into the Sea Dangerous; beyond which lie the "Terræ Incognitæ," or Unknown Lands, so called because we really know nothing about them!

All this is very ingenious, no doubt; but to our thinking, it is also very tedious, and one cannot estimate very highly the critical faculty or literary taste of a generation which went into raptures over Mademoiselle de Scudéry's allegorical map of "The Land of Tenderness." There was actually a Bishop—Godeau, Bishop of Vence—who poured out lyrical panegyrics upon "cette carte si jolie, si belle, si galante, et si pleine d'esprit!" And so great was its popularity that it led to imitation. For the Abbé d'Aubignac soon afterwards published his "Histoire du Temps, ou Relation du Royaume de la Coquetterie, extraite du dernier voyage des Hollandois aux Indes du Levant," which Mademoiselle de Scudéry denounced as an imitation of her "Carte de Tendre." The Abbé defended himself with firmness against the stigma of plagiarism. "What relation is there between the two books?" he indignantly exclaimed, "to suggest that either borrowed from the other? In the 'Carte de Tendre,' there are four towns, three rivers, two seas, a lake, and thirty little villages lying along different roads, so close to one another that travellers have no time to get fatigued. In the 'Kingdom of Coquetry,' you will find no rivers, and only a passing allusion to the sea; there is but one large town, and the highways are nowhere crowded with resting-places! It is a country where you must travel at a good pace, and make long stages, if you wish to reach its boundaries. Again: in Mademoiselle's little map what will you find in any particular resembling the Square of the Place of Cajolery, the Tournament of the Gilded Cars, the Combat of the Flowing Petticoats, the King's Square, the Palace of Good Fortunes, the Bureau of Rewards, the Abode of Coquettes, and the Chapel of Holy Return? Tenderness is, with me, merely a little bit of a ground in the Land of Friendship; and the Kingdom of Coquetry is of vast extent, comprising everything which can render a state considerable, and governed by all the maxims of a high policy. It has its King,

its religion, its laws, its schools, its trade, its public games, its warehouses, and its different classes."

The Rosicrucian romance, "Les Entre-tiens du Comte de Gabalis," by the Abbé de Villars, to which Lord Lytton was indebted in his "Zanoni," has an allegorical character. Then there are the "Relation de l'Île Imaginaire;" and Sorel's "Description de l'Île de Portraiture;" and Madame d'Aulnoy's "L'Île de la Felicité;" Dixmérie's "L'Île Taciturne et l'Île Enjouée;" and Carraccioli's "Voyage de la Raison en Europe."

Usually, the allegorist places the scene of his little drama in an island, as, by so doing, he obtains freer scope for his imagination, and more readily secures the reader's interest.

Of political allegories, probably the most famous—its title, indeed, has passed into daily speech—is the "Utopia" of Sir Thomas More, which so imposed upon Budæus, that he gravely proposed to despatch a mission for the conversion of the inhabitants of More's imaginary island. It was begun, probably, in 1515, and completed early in the following year, towards the end of which it was printed at Louvain, under the supervision of Erasmus. Its first appearance in England was in an English translation by Ralph Robinson, 1551. The hero is a certain Raphael Hythlodæ—ῥηθλος, δαλος, "learned in small things"—who, having accompanied Amerigo Vespucci on his voyages, does not return with him to Spain, but is left at Galike, whence he continues his travels, and falls in with the hitherto undiscovered island of Utopia, or "Nowhere." "The Republic of Plato," says Hallam, "no doubt furnished More with the germ of his perfect society; but it will be unreasonable to deny him the merit of having struck out the fiction of its real existence from his own fertile imagination; and it is manifest that some of his most distinguished successors in the same walk of romance, especially Swift, were largely indebted to his reasoning as well as inventive talents."

"The New Atlantis" of Bacon was obviously suggested by the "Utopia." It was never finished, and no comparison, therefore, can be instituted between it and its exemplar. The object in both is to describe an ideal state, "the best mould of a commonwealth," which is also the object of James Harrington's "Oceana" (1656); but whereas More's ruling principle is that

of "a community of wealth," Harrington's is that of "an equal agrarian basis, rising into the superstructure, or three orders: the senate debating and proposing, the people resolving, and the magistracy executing, by an equal rotation, through the suffrage of the people given by ballot." "Oceana" is England, "Marpesia" Scotland, "Panopceæ" Ireland, "Corannus" Henry the Eighth, "Parthenia" Queen Elizabeth, and "Megaletor" Cromwell. It is by no means a lively book; but some portions are ingenious, and all of it is worth reading.

The "Secret Memoirs and Manners of several Persons of Royalty of both Sexes, from the New Atalantis," an island in the Mediterranean (1736), by Mrs. De La Rivière Manley, takes an allegorical form, but cannot be described with accuracy as an allegory. As Bishop Warburton says, it is unpleasantly distinguished by its "loose effeminacy of style and sentiment," and much of its scandal is now incomprehensible.

ABOUT OLD PARIS.

JUST now that all the world has been, or is, thinking—perhaps too late—that it ought to go to Paris, it may be a fitting time to recall some of the ancient features of a city, the charm of which is still so strong upon its recent visitants. It may be said that there is no such thing as "old Paris;" that she—meaning Paris—is ever young and charming; and that what we have to talk about may be more fitly termed young Paris, or infant Paris, or earlier still, as embryo Paris. And it is certainly true that, through all its changes, the city had only become more gay and sprightly than ever. The terrible experiences it has gone through have left no wrinkled traces behind, and living fully up to the present, it has little thought to bestow on an utterly vanished past. Yet some of its visitors have a curiosity to know and to realise what the city may have been in the earlier stages of its existence. And although in existing Paris the monuments of antiquity are few and far between, yet the general anatomy of the old city may be still traced in the new.

The period of transition which may give us the best view of the remains of the old city and the beginning of the new, is to be found in the seventeenth century. And

that is the period when Paris becomes for the first time picturesquely and entirely visible to its neighbours across the Channel. The traditional friendship and alliance between the House of Stuart and the French brought about a constant intercourse between the two nations. The highway from London to Dover became frequented with people travelling between the two capitals. Never since the days of the pilgrimages to the shrine of Saint Thomas of Canterbury, had old Watling Street seen so much traffic up and down. Coaches, with gay Madames on board, Princesses, or Duchesses, as it might happen, lumbered over the broad, chalky tracks; the King's posts were urgent and frequent, and bands of gentlemen, booted and spurred, rode past at full speed in attendance upon some great lord. Then there were stage-waggon and coaches for humbler folk; and as people dined, and supped, and slept upon the way, tavern-keepers flourished, and towns and villages on the route benefited by the traffic.

In the present age it would not strike people as a feasible way of beginning the journey to Paris, to call a pair of oars from London Bridge stairs, and so sail down the river with bag and baggage. Yet the Thames then formed part of the great highway. Down to Gravesend by barge or wherry, and the land journey across Kent is considerably shortened. At the present day, hop-pickers, and others on the tramp, take the steamer thus far, on their way into Mid-Kent. Worthy John Evelyn, on his way to Paris, in 1643, rowed with a pair of oars as far as Sittingbourne, passing up the Swale, the channel that forms the Isle of Sheppey, and then by Milton Creek to his destination, but was exposed to a "horrid storm" in the open water off Sheerness, where the winds blow, and the waves beat, to a considerable tune, even now on a bleak November day.

But at Sittingbourne our shrewd traveller was more than half way to Dover, and had saved a large proportion of his posting charges. And at Dover there were always vessels waiting, which, with anything like a fair wind, carried passengers over to Calais in five or six hours.

At an earlier period, Sandwich had been the most frequented port for continental traffic, and Rye had subsequently come into favour; but now, nearly all people of condition travelled by way of Dover. And from Calais, on the other side of the Channel, there was a regular service of

"messageries," all the way to Paris. Our traveller, having dined at Calais at mid-day, takes horse, and accompanies the coach.

The way is long, and not without danger, for Spain and the Empire are at war with France; and although Rocroi has been fought, and the future "great Condé" hailed as victor, there are still plundering bands to be feared, whether of Spaniards, or of discharged soldiers from the French army. Yes, it was during that victorious war that Alsace was annexed to the Kingdom of France. The great Cardinal was recently dead, and the King had followed him to the tomb; Louis the Fourteenth was an infant in his cradle, and Anne of Austria and Mazarin ruled the destinies of France.

As to how Paris looked just then to our travellers descending upon it along the Royal highway from the north, we have some evidence in a plan of Paris—a perspective bird's-eye view rather than a plan, but that is so much the better for our purpose—drawn by one Merlam, in the year 1615. With but few changes and alterations, this plan, copied and re-copied, did duty till the middle of the century.

We approach the city, then, from the Abbey of Saint Denis, having stayed there awhile to visit the tombs of the Kings, and the riches of the treasury, which have hitherto been safe from sacrilegious hands, and we have seen from the summit of the neighbouring hill the towers and spires innumerable of old Paris, with a glimpse of the fair river as it issues from the dark masses of roofs and buildings.

While the grass-covered ramparts of the city are still at some distance, the coach and its attendant cavalcade are brought up at a bridge and gate, the former crossing the not very savoury open conduit which drains the upper part of the city, and which forms the boundary of the Octroi, where the municipal taxes are levied on the various goods which may be brought into the city. The gate is called the Fausse Porte Saint Denys, and the district between the, so to speak, sham gate of the Octroi and the actually fortified portal of the city wall is, in the same way, the Faubourg. And this distinction prevails all round Paris, and it will be found by our descendants in the nineteenth century, that this distinction is still preserved in the old streets of Paris. Thus, the Rue Saint Martin, when it has crossed the inner boulevard, becomes the Rue du Faubourg Saint Martin; and so with many others.

The ramparts themselves, which we are now approaching, date from the fourteenth century, and were the work of Charles the Fifth. The Parisians, zealous for the league, had manned them against the forces of Henry the Fourth, who, however, contented himself with a strict investment of the city, which caused something like a famine within the walls.

The Spanish Ambassador, who took part in the defence of the city, is said to have recommended the Parisians to grind up the old bones in their great cemetery of the Innocents, to make them bread; a piece of advice which, perhaps, had some influence in forwarding the eventual reconciliation between the Parisians and their King. But for all that, the walls are evidently now out of date; the city has outgrown them. The slopes are laid out in gardens; here and there the ramparts are crowned with windmills; yet do these grassy bulwarks afford a pleasant promenade to the Parisians, who, on Sundays and days of fête, come out in swarms to enjoy the fresh air upon their green slopes, and watch the mummery and mountebanks, who set up their booths in every spare corner. Before this seventeenth century is finished the ramparts will all be levelled, and planted with avenues of trees, will form a green cincture round the city. And so, in course of time, the Parisians, continuing to resort to them as eagerly as ever, these ramparts will be known as the Boulevards, and form one of the most characteristic features of the future Paris.

Yet within the circuit of the walls of Charles the Fifth, we shall find an earlier enceinte, with fragments of old walls and towers existing here and there—at the date of our seventeenth century visit—but destined to disappear, bit by bit, in the more recent improvements. These are the walls of Philip Augustus, the rival of our Cœur de Lion, and the conqueror of Normandy from our King John. His were the high and gloomy walls, the massive flanking round towers, with their conical roofs, the square and massive keep, or Bastille, which frowned upon the great highway that approached the city from the eastwards. His, too, was the low, squat tower of the Louvre, which was the starting-point of the wall on the western side.

Before Philip's time, the real Paris was confined to the great island in the Seine, which contains the Cathedral-church of Notre Dame, and the Palais, that seat of ancient Justice, which has remained there

since the days of the Roman empire. The isle, indeed, is the veritable Lutetia favoured by more than one Emperor, and destined by nature to become the seat of empire itself, no matter who might come or go. But a strongly-guarded tête du pont, on both banks of the river, preserved the command of the mainland on either side: that to the north being the Grand, and the southern the Petit Châtelet, which continued to be seats of the justice of the city long after their original uses were forgotten.

On the south side of the river, too, Philip enclosed, with his walls and turrets, the whole quarter of the University, and this enceinte was in existence, and tolerably perfect, when the plan of Paris, on which we are working, was prepared. It stretched, in a semicircle, from the tower of Tournelle, on the east—where, in the nineteenth century is the Halle aux Vins—to the great Tour de Nesle, on the west; the last one hundred and twenty feet high, with massive walls—a conspicuous object from all the surrounding country.

It was Mazarin who, soon after our imaginary visit, levelled the Tour de Nesle and the adjoining walls, and built upon the site his "College of the four Nations," intended for the education of the youth of Alsace, of Roussillon, and of the slice of Italy and Flanders which had been annexed to France during the Cardinal's lease of power, while along the line of ancient walls, was projected a new street, which still bears the name of the wily Cardinal, its projector; the College of the four Nations now forming part of the Palace of the Institut.

Originally the Tuileries and its gardens were outside the city wall; but they were presently enclosed with ditch and rampart, as well as a considerable portion of the surrounding country. And these ramparts, as shown upon the plan, indicate the future line of the Boulevards des Capucines and des Italiens. The inner wall between the Tuileries and Louvre seems to have formed a kind of terrace between the two palaces. Following the trace of this inner wall, where the Palais Royal was subsequently built by Cardinal Richelieu, there exists in the plan of 1613 a double avenue of trees and an open space, written down as the "Palmall," where sundry figures are to be seen playing the game of "palmall," furnished with long sticks like golf-clubs. There is another Palmall shown at the other end of

Paris, behind the Arsenal, where is now the Quai Henry the Fourth. The former of these is probably the model of our Mall in St. James's Park, and the germ of London's famous street of club-houses.

At the first general view of Paris as it appeared to our forefathers in the seventeenth century, we are struck with the overpowering number of churches, monasteries, friaries, stately abbeys, and nunneries of every description. The great abbeys in the outskirts give their names to corresponding streets within the city, and to the adjacent districts. Saint Denis, Saint Martin, Saint Antoine, rule the city north of the river, and the great and wealthy abbey of Saint Germain gives its name to a whole quarter on the south. Among the mass of houses, with their gabled ends and curiously-carved timbers rising storey over storey to an immense height, the great hotels of the grands seigneurs make open spaces here and there, with gardens, and groves, and secluded alleys of verdure. The bridges are pleasant to see, with rows of houses on each side, showing quaint pignons and elaborate sculptures. But the Pont Neuf is there, too, in the full gloss of its newness; an open bridge of more modern aspect, with the equestrian statue of Henry the Fourth in the centre. Across the confused mass of buildings from north to south, two main thoroughfares pierce their way—the Rues Saint Denys and Saint Martin—and these are continued under one name or another across isle and city to corresponding gateways on the south side. From east to west there is only the great Rue Saint Honoré, which with various turns and winds, and under different names, carries a distinct track from the Porte Saint Antoine, under the shadow of the Bastille, to the Butte Saint Roche, close by the Tuileries.

So is our ancient Paris compact and symmetrical, almost circular in form, and well to be taken in at a coup d'œil from any high point, such as the Tour Saint Jacques de la Boucherie, the walled city with the river flowing through, and forming the central islet, the Acropolis of the State—the river more animated and charged with life than at any period since. A river with every variety of craft gaily skimming its surface; great passage-boats hauled against the stream, a hundred barges loaded with goods of every description; the gondola of the grand seigneur, skiffs and pleasure-boats darting

to and fro, and the craft of the watermen moored in clusters by the quays and public stairs.

Passing quietly down the stream of time we come to the earliest complete guide-book to Paris, compiled by one Germain Brice, a man who knew the Paris of his day by heart, and who acted as guide and interpreter to strangers of distinction for nearly half a century. In 1687, Brice's book had reached a second edition, upon which our notes on old Paris will be founded. But the work was reprinted again and again, and the latest edition we have met with was published in 1752.

Many alterations had been made in Paris between the early part of the seventeenth century and its closing years. Richelieu had been at work, building the Palais Royal and piercing the street which still bears his name. Mazarin we have already seen at work on the other side of the river. But it was the age of Louis the Fourteenth which made the most havoc among the relics of the mediæval city. The lofty towers and richly-sculptured portals of the Gothic style are succeeded by the squat domes, the classic orders, the heavy sterile designs of the architects of the great monarch.

But we have the theatres. To begin with, the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the most ancient theatre in Europe, where comedy had been at home for upwards of four centuries. The beginning, according to what Monsieur Brice has been able to gather about the matter, was a certain "Confrérie de la Passion," composed of comedians, who performed moral and miracle plays under the protection of the Church. But these, taking to mundane and more or less naughty pieces, were driven out by the fathers of the Church; but were encouraged and restored by one of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, who gave them this hotel. In Brice's time, the Italian players are in possession here; never better lodged or better players than now, when crowds go there to admire Arlequin.

Then there is the theatre which Richelieu built at the corner of his Palace—close to the site of the nineteenth century Comédie Française—intending it for the Tragic Muse, but Molière had it afterwards, and when Monsieur Brice wrote, it was occupied for opera. An abbé was the founder of the opera—one Abbé Perrin, who took as his model that of Venice. He searched all Languedoc, noted for its choirs,

and drew all the best singers from the churches and elsewhere. Perrin, with two partners, one a man of quality, whom Monsieur Brice is too respectful to name, establish a new theatre at the Tennis Court, in the Rue Mazarin, opposite the Rue Guenegand, and here they produced their first opera, "Pomone," March, 1672, book by Perrin, music by Cambert, who was organist at Saint Honoré. The new opera ran for thirteen months; but in spite of this success, quarrels ensued among the triple management, and Perrin transferred the whole of his share to Lully, the King's chief musician. Lully, to rid himself of the other two, built a theatre in the Rue Vaugirard, by the help of Vigarani, mechanist to the King. But then Molière died, and the King was induced to give Lully the theatre at the Palais Royal, and the comedians had to shift their quarters to the Tennis Court, Rue Mazarin. And here they remained in Monsieur Brice's time, "it being the only place where French pieces are now represented. Formerly there were three"—the Palais Royal, the Marais du Temple, and the Hôtel de Bourgogne; but between the Opera and the Italian mountebanks, we have come to this! But courage, good Monsieur Brice, the comedy of France is not destined to extinction!

Then we have a description of the bridges, and Pont Notre Dame must have been especially nice, with houses on each side, with great statues of men and women carrying baskets of fruit in their hands, and, between each pair, medallions, on which are represented the Kings of France. By this bridge, always, the Queens enter Paris; and, when Isabel of Bavaria entered—Queen of Charles the Sixth—the bridge was all covered with blue taffetas, bordered with golden fleur-de-lis. And they say, that, as part of the pageant, an angel darted from the tower of Notre Dame and placed a crown of gold on the head of the Queen. But the Pont au Change, which was also covered with houses, has disappeared, and is replaced by a temporary wooden bridge. The bridge was burnt down in 1639.

And the mention of this last catastrophe brings to mind a reflection by Monsieur Brice, on the singular immunity that Paris has always enjoyed from extensive and destructive fires. One would have thought that with the tall timber houses, six and seven storeys high—such as had existed in Paris since the days of Philip Augustus—ranged in narrow streets where the light of

day hardly penetrated, fires would have been constant, and would have laid waste whole quarters. But none such have occurred within Monsieur Brice's memory, and he gives a hint of the cause. There was an affair of a talisman—Geoffrey of Tours is the authority—a plate of lead found under the gutter of a bridge, which was engraved with the representation of "a serpent, a water-rat, a flame." This curiosity, placed in the light of day, gave rise to curious effects. Serpents began to crawl about, armies of rats invaded the city, constant fires burst forth. At last, with due ceremony, the leaden plate was put to bed again, and, from that moment, there was no more trouble.

That the people of Paris still retained a morsel of heathen superstition about them, is also evidenced by what happened at the abbey church of Saint Germain, where a statue of the goddess Isis, dug up from some foundations, became the object of popular devotion, and was therefore ground to powder by the scandalised fathers of the abbey. Then we have La Grève, in front of the Hôtel de Ville, once the place of execution, now, in Brice's time, devoted to shows and public exhibitions; while, "here the 'fires of Saint John are kindled,' on the eve of Midsummer day."

But in the time of Monsieur Brice a new Paris was coming into existence. Along the Rue Saint Denis handsome new mansions had been built by the Canons of Saint Germain Auxerrois, who let them to people of condition to good advantage. The Marais du Temple, formerly a marsh, then market-gardens, was being covered with fine new houses. The Temple itself still remained, surrounded by ancient walls flanked by towers, very much as it had been in the days of the Knights Templars. The Knights of Saint John held it still. Philip de Vendôme was grand master, and drew twenty thousand crowns a year from his benefice. The city gate, called the Temple, had just been pulled down, and a Broadway had been made along the space lately occupied by the city wall and ditch. Already coaches might be driven from the Temple gate to the Porte Saint Antoine; the boulevards, in fact, had come into existence, but the name as yet was not. The road was still known as the rampart.

Another landmark of the period which still survives is the Place de Vendôme. The Hôtel de Vendôme was in course of

demolition as well as the convent of the Capucines, to make room for a magnificent public place—the place which is in our days marked by the stately column that commemorates the victories of Napoleon.

A later manual, which offers itself as a guide for travellers of condition, to make a good use of time and money, is the "Séjour de Paris," of 1727, which gives advice to tourists in the following easy and pleasant fashion:

"You arrive at Paris, we will say, by ordinary chariot, or with post-horses. If by the chariot, there are certain auberges where these put up, and where chambers can be had; and if you have no friends in Paris, put up at the auberge, when, if you have made friends on the way with the head postillion, you will find everybody ready to serve you. If you come by post-horses, you must look out for an hostelry. The best of these are in the Faubourg of Saint Germain." And our author gives a list of them—the names familiar enough, and some of them subsisting, in one form or another, to the present day. Among these is the Hôtel de Treville, "where Mr. Prior had his apartments."

With time to look about him, the traveller should soon find suitable apartments. He must be careful in his dress, not to be singular, but to dress after the prevailing fashion. "The English do not willingly alter their mode when they come to Paris. They still wear their short 'juste au corps,' their little cravats, their little hats, and strangely-fashioned perruques, an equipage which distinguishes them from everybody else." It is delightful to meet with this little reproach, which everybody has repeated from generation to generation. Is the Englishman in fault, or is it the case of the dog with the bad name? One sees some extraordinary costumes among French provincials in Paris, but nobody thinks of sarcasm in their case.

But our traveller, *comme il faut*, will have provided himself with all that is necessary. He must have a laced coat à la mode, which will introduce him at Court, and at all the aristocratic assemblies. He must also have a simple coat of taffetas, or other silk stuff, for ordinary occasions, with a waistcoat of gold or silver cloth—modest and unobtrusive. A scarlet surcoat is indispensable, and a black coat must be in reserve, in case of Court mourning. Go to a good tailor and perruquier, and don't spare a few crowns, adds our author, sententiously—

a good perruque is the ornament of the noblest part of man.

A valet is indispensable, and easily to be had. He costs you a franc a day, for which he feeds and clothes himself. These gentry are generally faithful and honest, it is to their interest to be so, for justice treats them unceremoniously enough. The one who steals to-day, perhaps, is hanged to-morrow. You will dine at the public tables—the fare is much the same everywhere: a soup, a piece of boiled beef, a so-called entry of ragout, a fricassee of veal or cutlets, a few vegetables, the roast; and for dessert, milk-cheese, biscuits, and such fruits as are in season. And this from one year's end to another. But you will have good company, with plenty of mirth and laughter. At dessert you will be plagued enough by the importunates. Monks appeal to you who are collecting for their convent, and offer you a plate of salad as an inducement to open your purse. Then there are the flower-girls, and sellers—both male and female—of all kinds of toys and friandises—and the money that goes that way!

But the serious purpose of your journey must be attended to, and that is, no doubt, to perfect yourself in the accomplishments of a man of fashion. And you will have to work hard at that, if you mean to make full use of your opportunities. Here is your day sketched out: The French master comes at seven, and from eight to nine you practise your exercises, writing letters in French, the great use of the language. At nine the "mathematics" arrives, and after an hour with him you work at the problems he has set you till eleven. At that hour you are due at the Salle d'Armes, to practise your carte and tierce, and try your strength against the skilful swordsmen of the day. And then you may have an hour's relaxation in reading, before dinner. At one everybody dines, in the manner we have shown above. After dinner, you practise drawing for an hour; and at three you go to the dancing-class, where you will be put through your paces by a severe and exacting professor. After that, your time is your own, and you may enjoy yourself, with discretion, as you please.

Such was a visit to Paris in other days, and perhaps we have no great reason to regret the change that time has made. Yet, after all, wide as is the difference between the gay and glittering capital of to-day, and the Paris that, in material guise, has all but passed away, there is

still a good deal in common between the two; and the germ of much that is now existing and flourishing may be found in the varied and often sombre memories of old Paris.

A TERRIBLE COINCIDENCE.

A STORY IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

By ADA L. HARRIS.

CHAPTER VII.

THE next day the lady of the house left her room and resumed her former insignificant position in the establishment. There was very little difference, if any, to be seen in her manner or appearance. Perhaps a little additional nervousness and a marked increase in her peculiar habit of trying to see over her shoulder without turning her head.

As for myself, I hardly knew what to do. Sometimes I felt as though I must relinquish my situation at any cost, for my nights grew worse instead of better, and body and mind seemed equally unhinged by the atmosphere of doubt and dread in which I was enveloped. But for the sake of the child, who, in spite of her mischievous ways and monkeyish tricks, had formed a real attachment towards me, and—well, perhaps, another reason, which I need not particularly mention, beyond the fact that it was not wholly unconnected with a member of the healing art—I should have thrown it up without a moment's delay and returned to the shabby little house at Highbury.

And this brings me down to the memorable Thursday, when Mrs. Wild was pronounced to be in her usual health, and her medical adviser paid his last visit. By the bye, I might mention that, though going by the unceremonious appellation of "old Dr. Green's assistant," the greater part of the practice was, in reality, in his hands—old Dr. Green being invalided by rheumatism and almost superannuated.

It was then, after he had taken a final leave, as it was supposed, of his patient, that he took me aside on some pretext, and, looking at me earnestly, said:

"You are no better."

I shook my head. There was no need for me to reply, as my haggard looks spoke for me plainly enough.

"I shall send you a sleeping-draught to-night," was his further remark. "Wait until the house is quiet and then take the entire dose."

And with that he departed. The medicine made its appearance in due time—a not particularly prepossessing-looking mixture—and, at half-past ten, I retired with it to my room. It was no use attempting to take it yet. The doctor had emphatically said: "Wait until the house is quiet;" and I could still hear Mr. Wild taking his customary stealthy constitutional up and down the gravel carriage-track in front of the house. How I disliked and distrusted the man, and wondered what evil purpose he was planning as the faint squelch of his heel upon the gravel told me that he was out there perambulating the house in the darkness! Then I heard the solid tramp of Martha Horrocks, accompanied by her satellite—the dish and floor scrubber—as they sought the floor above. I heard the slam of the door, and then, for ten minutes or more, the sound of heavy footsteps overhead. Then all was quiet. Presently came the sound of the hall door being quietly closed, and a man's tread upon the stairs below.

Now was the proper time to take my medicine. It had a disagreeable taste; but I drained it to the dregs and lay down to wait for the sleep I so sorely needed. Whether I slept or not, I do not know; but in what seemed to me about the space of half an hour, I was seized with a sudden anxiety about Florence, who slept in a little room close to mine. There was nothing the matter with the child, in fact she had retired to rest in what was apparently the most uproarious health and spirits at her usual hour of eight, and had probably been fast asleep for hours. But somehow or other I felt that I must rise and ascertain with my own eyes that she was safe and well.

I knew it was foolish in the extreme; but after resisting the impulse for some moments, I gave way to it, and, lighting a candle and slipping on a dressing-gown and a pair of felt slippers, I stole softly across the passage which divided my room from hers. There was a night-light burning there, and, shading the light of my candle with my hand for fear it should wake her, I saw, with relief and satisfaction, that she was slumbering profoundly, with her mouth wide open.

She was not a pretty child under the most favourable circumstances; and now, as she slept the sleep of innocence, lying in a most unpicturesque attitude, with a halo of curl-papers surrounding her brow, she

was not at her best. But I had a liking for my queer, precocious, troublesome little charge; and, setting down the candle, I proceeded to straighten the bed-clothes, and endeavour to make her more comfortable without awakening her. Then I sat down for a moment or two, and beginning to feel the effects of the draught I had taken coming over me, said to myself, "I must make haste back to bed before they pass off." But, instead of doing that, I must have fallen asleep where I was; for, when I awoke again suddenly with a shiver and start, my candle, which I had placed on the bureau, was burnt down to within half an inch of its socket, and the child was still asleep. And surely the potion must have affected my brain, for else, why, on leaving the room, did I, instead of turning my steps towards my own apartment, descend the staircase, until I found myself creeping along the passage belonging to the first-floor. I passed the closed doors of two or three rooms, being drawn on by some unknown influence to which I yielded myself without resistance, until I saw light streaming through a half-closed door at the end of the corridor, and heard the sound of a voice—the voice of Mrs. Wild—speaking in a tone which I scarcely recognised as hers. It was low, but at the same time penetrating and terrible. What was I doing there at that hour of the night? And why, why had I been brought from my room on the floor above by no will or intention of my own?

I blew out my candle, hardly knowing what I did, and crept nearer and nearer to that door through which the light streamed, until I brought its interior into focus. It was, as I knew, Mrs. Wild's dressing-room; and, as I shrank into the shadow formed by the angle of the wall, I saw her standing there—a small, white, eerie-looking figure—by the dressing-table, which was littered by the usual paraphernalia of the toilet. Opposite to her was her husband, dressed, with the exception of his coat, and with his pale, sinister eyes now open to their widest extent, and full of a fiendish lustre, as he fixed them upon her; while she gazed back at him with the terror of a dumb animal exposed to the remorseless and devilish influence of some member of the reptile world. But she was not dumb, for I had already heard her speak; and, as I cowered and listened, she began to speak again. And then I saw that she held something

clutched tightly in one hand, which was partly hidden from me, but gleamed with a bluish gleam as the light glinted upon it. "I tell you I will not do it—no, you shall not make me." The words came low but distinct from between her white, strained lips. "I have escaped you twice, and shall again! You dare not kill me yourself, though you hate me and I am in your way; and so you try to make me destroy myself by the wicked power which you have over me; but I defy you——"

She broke off suddenly, and then I knew I must be dreaming. What I saw and heard could be no reality, but only a horrible, ghostly vision, conjured up by the power of the drug I had swallowed. If I could only wake!

The man answered not a word, but reared his head like a rattlesnake preparing to spring, and concentrated upon her the full power of his gaze, before which she paled and shrunk, but never turned aside her own; and I knew in my heart—though this was only a dream, and I should wake soon, trembling and bathed with perspiration—that he was willing her to do this thing by the strange power which he had over her, and to which she must, sooner or later, succumb. If she could but elude his glance for a second, the spell would be broken, and she would be saved. But as I looked the crisis came. Once more she spoke; but this time the words sounded far off, as one who talked in her sleep, uttering things of which she was unconscious.

"If I do this, it will leave you free to marry the other woman; and you will be able to squander upon her the money which belongs to me. You both hate me, and wish me dead; and to please you I must kill myself—to please you, for I do not want to die yet, miserable as I am!"

How much longer must the dream last? When should I be able to free myself from the paralyzing power of the nightmare which hung over me? Already the woman's voice was growing fainter, and the vision that I saw flickered and danced before my eyes. But in the midst of the whirl and confusion which possessed my brain, I saw the man lift his arm for the first time, and make a gesture. The woman facing him gave a low, weird cry of horror and despair, and raised the hand, which all this time she had kept hidden, to her throat! There was a flash of steel; a groan; and a crimson stream spurted out and stained the whiteness of her garment.

After that darkness fell upon me, during which I seemed to be stumbling painfully through endless passages, and up and up countless flights of steep stairs, leading nowhere! Then, with an effort, I woke—woke, to find that I was in my own bed, in my own room, and, thank Heaven, that it was only a dream—only a dream. And then, turning on my side, I fell asleep again.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN I next awoke it was in the cold, grey, wintry light of early morning. I woke with a sudden start—with the impression, too, that I had been suddenly roused from sleep by some outward agency; and as I listened it came again—a woman's sharp, shrill shriek of horror and dismay:

"Oh, my mistress!" I heard in a wild, agonised wail; and then I remembered my dream!

I rose, and huddled on my things, shaking the while, as with an ague, and then clinging to the hand-rail, made my way down the stairs to that first-floor, which had been the scene of my vision of the night before. At the foot of the stairs I was confronted by the frantic figure of Martha Horrocks.

"Go back," she cried, waving me from her, "go back, I say! It's no sight for the likes o' you!"

Her grizzled hair was streaming loose over her shoulders, and her face was ghastly to look upon.

"What is it?" I murmured, hoarsely, clinging to the banisters for support.

"What is it, you ask?" she echoed, her voice rising almost into a scream. "What is it but my mistress lying dead yonder—murdered—with her throat cut from ear to ear!"

And as those awful words struck upon my ear, I cried aloud, and fell headlong down the remaining stairs, and knew no more for many days.

When my senses came to me again, I was lying in a strange bed, in a strange room, and as I raised my head from the pillow I saw my mother sitting sewing in the window. How came she there, I wondered? And as I looked, she, too, raised her eyes, and seeing me gazing at her, came towards me. But when I would have spoken, and asked the meaning of all this, she laid her hand upon my lips, and implored me to keep silence. I had had brain-fever, and for three weeks had known

no one, and only the most careful and devoted nursing and medical attention had carried me through. I had been removed from Woodburn Hall to lodgings in the village, and my mother had been telegraphed for to come and nurse me. When they at last allowed me to ask questions, I was told that, in consequence of the terrible event at the Hall, where Mrs. Wild had committed suicide, in, what was supposed to be, a fit of temporary insanity, the place had been shut up, and the husband of the deceased lady—who had been much overcome at her dreadful end—had gone abroad to seek distraction in change of scene.

Terrible images flitted across my brain as I thought of what I had seen and heard in my dream; but the most terrible thought of all was the one which persistently occurred to me from time to time, and seemed to tell me that what I had witnessed was no dream! I also heard another fact in connection with the tragedy, which caused me additional mental suffering, which was, that, at the inquest, Martha Horrocks, who had been called as a chief witness, had broken out into wild invective, and hurled the most hideous accusations against her master, who, she declared, was the cause of it all, and had made her mistress commit the act, "and could make anybody do anything he chose, if he set his mind to it!" But her words were looked upon as ravings, excusable only by reason of her devotion to her dead mistress—for had not the unfortunate lady been found with the razor, which was the instrument of the deed, so tightly clutched in her cold hand, that considerable force had been required to extricate it from her death grasp?

At last, after enduring an amount of mental torture which seriously retarded my recovery, I laid the whole matter before Dr. Howard, who was still in anxious attendance upon me. The gravity with which he received my communication deepened the impression already formed in my mind. But, after hearing me out, and considering deeply for some time, he replied that it was a matter beyond him—for, whether the sleeping-draught had excited my brain, so that what I saw, or thought I saw, was but a delirious vision, or whether, in a state of semi-somnambulism, I had really witnessed the awful scene I described, he could not tell;

though he thought in all probability, and he also begged me to think so with him, that the former was the case, and the death of Mrs. Wild by her own hand, the same night, was only a terrible coincidence. So I tried to put the thing out of my mind and keep myself from dwelling upon the horrors which my imagination conjured up.

About a week after my convalescence, however, another link in the chain of mystery was forged by the agency of Martha Horrocks, who, before quitting the village and seeking her livelihood elsewhere, called to bid me farewell. She was much changed, and there was an air of suppressed fury about her, which made me endeavour, as far as possible, to keep the conversation from turning into the channel I dreaded. She told me, among other things, that Florence had been sent off, the day after the funeral, to a boarding-school at the sea-side.

Poor Florence! I was fond of the child; but the thought of her recalled other memories, and I put it aside!

But the most remarkable thing she said was, as I was bidding her good-bye, when she lowered her voice and, with a tightening of the lips and a look of sombre curiosity in her eyes, said:

"Did you ever hear as there was a candlestick found lying on the floor of the passage, just outside the dressing-room door, like the candlestick as used to stand on the mantelshelf in your bedroom? Whoever dropped it there knows more of that night's work than any one else living—except him!"

I have no more to say, except that there was one happy result from my brief and tragical sojourn at Woodburn Hall—the site of which has been sold, and the house pulled down to make room for the new railway—I have married old Dr. Green's assistant, who has taken over the whole of the practice, and now keeps an assistant on his own behalf.

I had almost forgotten to add that, three months after his wife's death by her own hand, we heard that Mr. Wild had married again, and some people, who have met them both abroad, and know their story, declare that there is the shadow of some dark secret brooding over them, and that the life of the second wife is even a more wretched and terror-stricken existence than was that of the first.

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